

By the King: A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco, 1630

Dieu et mon droit [which translates as God and my right]

Honi soit qui mal y pense [which translates as Shamed be he who thinks ill of it]

By the King.

A Proclamation concerning Tobacco.

Whereas in the Reigne of Our most deare and Royall Father, King James of blessed memory, and since our accesse to the Crowne, severall Proclamations have been made and published concerning Tobacco, yet notwithstanding all the care and providence which hath hitherto been used, We finde the unlimited desire of gaine, and the inordinate appetite of taking Tobacco, hath so farre prevailed that Tobacco hath been continued to bee planted in great quantities, in severall parts of this Dux Realme, and a vast proportion of unserviceable Tobacco made and brought from our Colonies of Virginia, Summer Ilands, and other our Forreigne Plantations, besides an incredible quantity of Brasill and Spanish Tobacco imported hither, and secretly conveyed on Land. And it is now come to passe, That those Our Forreigne Plantations, that might become usefull to this Kingdome, lingering onely upon Tobacco, are in apparant danger to be otterly ruined, unlesse Wee speedily provide for their subsistence; The bodies and manners of Our people are also in danger to bee corrupted, and the wealth of this Kingdome exhausted by so useless a weede as Tobacco is; which beeing represented unto Us by the humble Petition of Our loveing Subjects the Planters and Adventurers in Virginia, and also by the like humble Petition of the Retailers and Sellers of Tobacco in and about Our Cities of London and Westminster, Wee have thought it worthy of Our Princely case, as a matter not only fit for Our profit, & the profit of Our people, but much concerning Us in Our honour and government so to regulate the same, and compell due obedience thereto, that Our Forreigne Platations and Colonies may bee supported and encourages, and they made usefull to this Kingdome, by applying themselves to more solide commodities, that the healths of Our Subjects may be preserved, the wealth of this Kingdome enlarged, and the manners of Our people so ordered and goverend, that the world may not justly tax Us, that there are at once endangered only by the licentious use of Tobacco.

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And therefore having seriously advissed hereof, Wee, by the advice of Our Prime Councill, have now resolved upon, and published these Our Commands following concerning Tobacco, which Our Royall will and pleasure is, shall be in all things observed upon paine of Our highest displeasure, and of such paines, penalties and punishments, as by Our Court of Exechequer, and Court of Starre Chamber, and by any other Courts and ministires of Justice, or by Our Perogative Royall can be inflicted upon the offenders.

And first, Our will and command is, that no person whatsoever doe at any time hereafter plant, preserve, or maintain any Toba[cco] which is, hath been, or shall be planted in Our Kingdomes of England or Ireland, or Dominion of Wales, or in the Lands of Jersey or Guernesey, but that the same bee utterly displanted and destroyed, and that none presume or adventure to Buy, Sell, or utter any such Tobacco, the same being utterly unwholesom to bee taken.

And further, that no Tobacco whatsoever be from hencefoorth imported into these Our realms, or any haven, Port, Creeke or place therof which is or shall be of the growth of any of the parts or places beyond the Seas, belonging to, or under the obedience of any foreine King, Prince, or State whatsoever; But such, and so much thereof onely, as wee shall specially allow to be imported, untill it shall be fully settled between those forreine Princes and Us, according to those Treaties which are between Us, that Our Subjects may not unthriftilly bent the solide Commiditeis of Our owne Kingdomes, and return the proceed thereof in Smoake.

And further We will and command, that no Tobacco of the growth of any of Our English Plantations in Virginia the Sommer Islands, Caribee Islands, or other Islands or places in America, or the Coast thereof, be at any time hereafter imported or brought into Our Kingdomes of England or Ireland, or Dominion of Wales, at any other port then at or in Our Port of London, onely and the same duely entred in Our Custome-houses there, nor that any greater quantitie thereof bee imported there, then wee by the advice of an immeasurable expence of so vaine and needlesse a Commoditie, which ought to bee used as a Drugge onely, and not so vainely and wantonly as an evill habite of late times hath brought it into.

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And these sorts of Tobacco which shall be thus brought from Our owne Colonies, wee will take present order shall bee well ordered and made up, and so certified to bee, under the hand of the Government of that place, and when the same shall be brought hither, shall bee againe Searched, Tried and Sealed, that Our Subjects be not abused by corrupt Tobacco.

And Our expresse Command is, that whatsoever Tobacco shall be taken, which shall be imported contrary to this Our Proclamation, the same shall be forfeited and confiscated, and by the Officers of the Port or place where it shall be taken , shall be immediately burnt.

And for the ordering of governing of the expence and use of Tobacco when it shall be imported, Wee, by the advice of Our Prince Councill, shall speedily direct such a course as Wee shall hold fit, which Wee expect shall be also in all things observed.

And Wee straitly charge and Command all Our Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, and all other the Officers and Ministers of Our Ports, that they and every of them in their severall places, doe carefully and faithfully observe Our Royal Command, in, and concerning the premisse; and if any of them shall be found remisse or negilgent therein, or to conniue at any such offender, that hee or they shall for such their fault, without any remission be removed from the place or places of his or their attendance on Our service.

And to the end Our pleasure and Command hereby published, may be the better executed, Wee doe hereby will, require and Command, all Majors, Sheriffes, Justices of peace, Bayliffes, headboroughs, and other Our Officers and loveing Subjects whatsoever, to be aiding and assisting, and so much as in them lyeth, to take care that the premisses herein mentioned, be uly put in execution, as they tender their duetie and alleganace to Us, and will answere the contrary at their uttermost perils.

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Given at Our Court at Whitehall the fixt day of January, in the fixt yeere of Our Reigne.

God Save the King

Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie: and by
the Assignes of John Bill. 1630

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